

streets but doing so in a way that ensures American citizens' constitutional rights will be respected.

I think this just makes sense. I think it is pretty reasonable, and it is a good starting point if we are trying to address the real threat of Islamic extremism rearing its ugly head here at home, but as I mentioned, we must do more than equip our law enforcement officials with the tools they need in order to collect evidence and hopefully prevent these attacks from occurring in the future.

So going forward, I hope we will come up with an agreement that any response to domestic terrorism must include providing the FBI and other law enforcement the resources and authorities to track down terrorists and take them off the streets.

FORT HOOD TRAGEDY

Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, about a dozen soldiers were in an Army tactical vehicle in Fort Hood, TX, as part of a larger training exercise when they were swept off the road. Nine of them lost their lives by drowning. This was in the aftermath of heavy rain and flooding throughout Texas, and their vehicle overturned as they tried to cross a flooded creek.

As I said, out of the 12 people swept out of the tactical vehicle, 9 of them drowned, but thankfully 3 survived. The nine who died came from all over America—California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Indiana, and Texas. They were also at various stages of their honorable careers of serving our country and the U.S. Army.

Today, at the Spirit of Fort Hood Chapel, the Fort Hood community is gathering to remember each of them, their families, to offer prayers for their friends and family left behind, and to consider how we can honor their legacy going forward.

I, of course, send my prayers and deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. I can't imagine their pain, but I share in their grief. Fort Hood is a resilient place. Over the years, it has experienced a number of tragedies, including the shooting by MAJ Nidal Husein, just to name another one. They have experienced tragedy before, and I hate that they have to do so again, but I know, without a doubt, that the community there that is nicknamed "the great place" is strong, and I hope and pray the service today is a time of hopeful remembrance for those who committed their lives to protect and defend our freedoms.

I thank them for their service, and I stand ready to support the Fort Hood community in any way I can while they continue to grieve the loss of these nine heroes.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate Resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 495, S. Res. 496, S. Res. 497, and S. Res. 498.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT OF 2016

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2815 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2815) to establish the United States Semiquincentennial Commission, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2815) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2815

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that July 4, 2026, the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, as marked by the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and the historic events preceding that anniversary—

(1) are of major significance in the development of the national heritage of the United States of individual liberty, representative government, and the attainment of equal and inalienable rights; and

(2) have had a profound influence throughout the world.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to establish a Commission to provide for the observance and commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States and related events through local, State, national, and international activities planned, encouraged, developed, and coordinated by a national commission representative of appropriate public and private authorities and organizations.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the United States Semiquincentennial Commission established by section 4(a).

(2) PRIVATE CITIZEN.—The term "private citizen" means an individual who is not an officer or employee of—

(A) the Federal Government; or

(B) a State or local government.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established a commission, to be known as the "United States Semiquincentennial Commission", to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the history of the United States leading up to the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be composed of the following members:

(1) 4 members of the Senate, of whom—

(A) 2 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; and

(B) 2 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(2) 4 members of the House of Representatives, of whom—

(A) 2 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(B) 2 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(3) 16 members who are private citizens, of whom—

(A) 4 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(B) 4 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(C) 4 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(D) 4 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; and

(E) 1 of whom shall be designated by the President as the Chairperson.

(4) The following nonvoting ex officio members:

(A) The Secretary.

(B) The Secretary of State.

(C) The Attorney General.

(D) The Secretary of Defense.

(E) The Secretary of Education.

(F) The Librarian of Congress.

(G) The Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

(H) The Archivist of the United States.

(I) The presiding officer of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

(c) TERM; VACANCIES.—

(1) TERM.—A member shall be appointed for the life of the Commission.

(2) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Commission—

(A) shall not affect the powers of the Commission; and

(B) shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(d) MEETINGS.—All meetings of the Commission shall be convened at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to honor the historical significance of the building as the site of deliberations and adoption of both the United States Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

(e) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

SEC. 5. DUTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall—

(1) prepare an overall program for commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States and the historic events preceding that anniversary; and

(2) plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate observances and activities commemorating the historic events that preceded, and are associated with, the United States Semiquincentennial.